

PADY DILLON

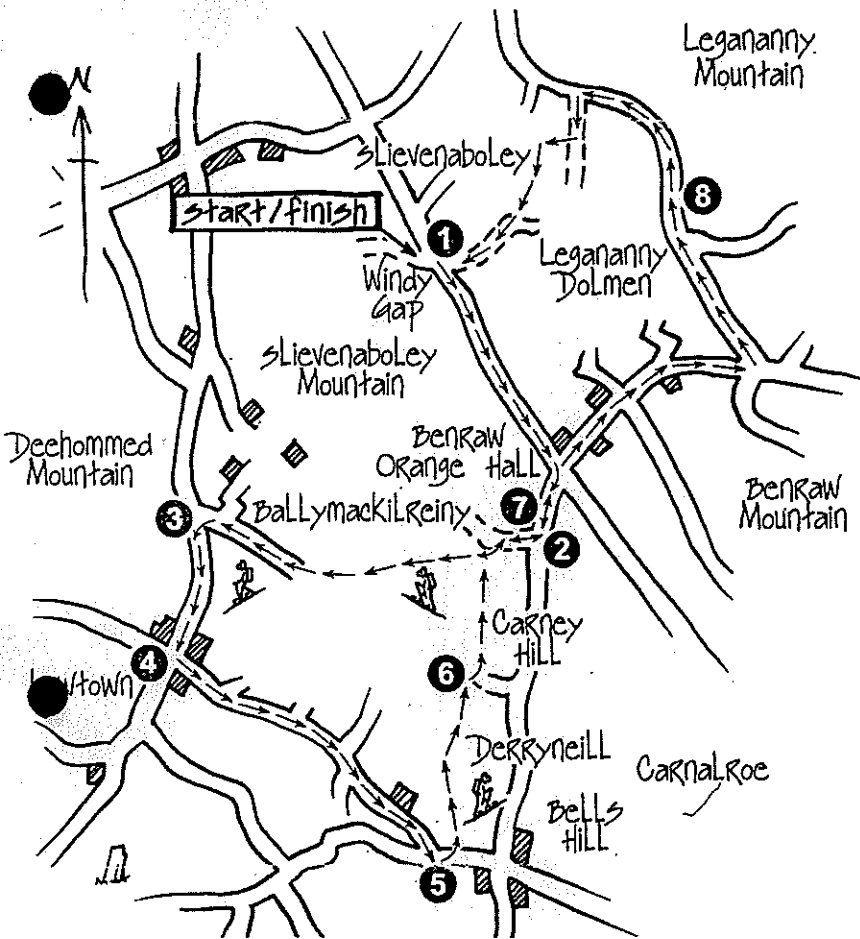


The Dolmen. Intriguing, but what's it for?

15km/9¼ miles 5 hours Moderate

# Loopin' the Loanin

The Windy Gap is a little-known viewpoint near Slieve Croob, and as it has a car park it makes a handy starting point for a walk through quiet countryside. Paths in these parts have interesting names, such as the Moat Pad and Adder's Loanin, which can be linked with minor roads to form a couple of easy loops among rolling hills. A short detour towards the end takes in the Legananny Dolmen, which is one of the most well-promoted images in the area, even if most people wouldn't have a clue how to find it! The Dolmen is 5,000 years old and has a tilted capstone supported by three slender pillars. *By Paddy Dillon.*



Go through a couple of gates to continue climbing, following a grassy path flanked by hedgerows as it runs through fields. There are two more small gates on the way, and views of the Mountains of Mourne, Slieve Foye, Cooley Hills and Slieve Gullion.

**6** 8km/5 miles  
Cross a couple of step-stiles to pass a farm, then turn R along a concrete access road. Turn L up a gravel track that is grassy and muddy in places as it crosses Carney Hill. A farm track is reached that was followed earlier in the day. Turn R and follow it down to Lighthouse Road.

**7** 9km/5½ miles  
Retrace your earlier steps to Benraw Orange Hall. Go R to follow Legananny Hall Road uphill. Cross the highest part of the road and walk down to a crossroads at Legananny Orange Hall. Turn L along Legananny Road, as signposted for Legananny Dolmen, and follow other signposts indicating turns to R and L to reach the dolmen.

**8** 12km/7½ miles  
Walk down to Legananny Road and turn R to follow it. Watch for a footpath sign on the L and follow a grassy track uphill, but turn R at a waymark to follow a narrower track. Cross a step stile by a gate and continue uphill. Turn L as indicated up a grooved track that can be muddy in places. Cross another stile while walking straight on to reach a road, where a L turn leads back to the start.

## The walk

**1** Start  
Follow a path above the car park to enjoy views of the Mountains of Mourne and Slieve Croob, with the Belfast Hills and Sperrins more distant. Follow the road to Leitrim and pass the Benraw Orange Hall, which is painted blue. Turn R along Lighthouse Road, following it downhill and then uphill. Turn R along a track signposted as the Moat Pad Footpath.

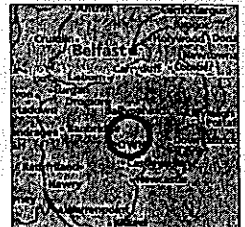
**2** 2km/1¼ mile  
Before the track reaches a house, turn L, R and L again.

The track can be muddy. A waymark post indicates a R turn through a small gate, and you continue up a narrow track to Carney Hill. Go through a gate at the top of the track, through a gate on the way to a pig farm, and through a gate into the farmyard. A road leads to a minor road, where you go L.

**3** 4km/2½ miles  
At the crossroads in the village of Lowtown there is a small shop and bar. These could be useful for a lunch break, if they are open.

**4** 5km/3 miles  
Go L along Ballymackilreiny Road to leave Lowtown. The road undulates through farmland and past Derryneil baptist church. Turn L at a junction with Millvale Road and pass derelict Derryneil Orange Hall. A signpost on the L indicates the Adder's Loanin Footpath.

**5** 7km/4¼ miles  
Cross a step-stile beside a gate and follow a fenced, grassy track. Go through a wooden gate, turn L, then R, following the track past a couple of ruined buildings.



### IS THIS WALK FOR YOU?

**Terrain** Fairly easy walking on good paths, tracks and roads  
**Stiles** 5  
**Suitable for** Older children

### PLANNING

**Start/parking** Windy Gap above Gransha, grid ref 274431  
**Nearest town** Newcastle and Ballynahinch  
**Refreshments** Small shop and bar at Lowtown  
**Public toilets** None  
**Public transport** Ulsterbus 27 & 27A are infrequent services to Gransha  
**Other DYW walks in this area** Walk 25, May 2000; Walk 13, May 1996

### MAPS

Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland Discoverer Sheets 20 and 29



● To order Ordnance Survey maps for this walk tel 020 8399 1235